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BOXER TO DEFEND WELTERWEIGHT TITLE

By Mike Heronemus
Editor

David "Strictly Business" Medina left the Army and then left his job at Fort Riley to pursue his dream – wearing the World Super Welterweight Championship belt for boxing.

His next step toward that goal is a bout Aug. 26 at the Geary County Convention Center in Junction City. He will be defending the World Boxing Council U.S. Super Welterweight title he won July 5 against challenger Chris Overbey of Sidney, Ohio, in the main attraction of a seven-fight program.

Medina also holds the Global Boxing Union Middleweight title.

While in the Army, Medina earned a boxing berth with the Army's World Class Athlete Program at Fort Carson, Colo, where he trained for about six months before winning the Armed Forces Championship in 1999. He went to the Olympics trials in 2000.

After getting out of the Army, Medina worked as a mechanic for ECS No. 33 at Fort Riley, repairing trucks for the 89th Regional Support Command.

Even while employed with ECS No. 33, Medina got time off to fight in Colorado Springs and to train for three weeks in California.

His supervisor, Bill Calkins, explained that he was always willing to help someone trying to better himself. In Medina's case, he granted leave without pay in most instances, Calkins said.

When Medina decided to begin training full-time in hopes of becoming a world champion, Calkins put a letter in Medina's file that will give him rehiring rights for up to a year, if a position is available.

Medina's full-time training schedule includes riding his bike 25 to 40 miles every morning, working out at Geary Rehab and Fitness Center in Junction City for a couple of hours in the early afternoon and running short distances every evening.

Gym workouts include bag work, jumping rope, push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups and dead weights, "anything to build up my shoulders. It takes a lot of shoulder and chest strength to go 10 rounds, 30 minutes," Medina said.

With that in mind, he works out with 16-ounce gloves even though he boxes with 10-ounce gloves.

He also spars with members of KO Boxing Club in Manhattan every Wednesday evening.

Those boxers are amateurs or hobby enthusiasts, so Medina concentrates on his defensive moves while they practice offensive moves, he said.

Lorissa Ridley-Fink runs KO Boxing Club. She has about 15 to 20 boxers now but expects that number to increase once Kansas State University classes get under way.

Three of her boxers are active duty Soldiers, and one other is the wife of a Soldier, she said. These club members and others are more into boxing as a hobby, not as serious about it as Medina is, she said.

Even so, Ridley-Fink teaches her boxers the proper way to fight, avoiding the aerobics programs that having been adapted to boxing moves. "I've taught boxing more than 20 years. I haven't boxed professionally, but I train them to box like a professional," she said.

Boxing with Medina is good for them, Ridley-Fink said. "Some of them look at me as just a woman who doesn't know what she's talking about. So, when I tell them they're dropping their right hand and then David hits them in the face or the ribs because they're dropping their right hand, they begin to believe me more," she said.

After the Aug. 26 fight, Medina plans to train at a boxing camp in Las Vegas, Nev., in preparation for a fight in October at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. His promoter, Zef Ramirez of Zeferino Entertainment, will continue to seek opponents for the rising ring star.

Medina takes an 11-1-0 record with six knockouts into the ring against Overbey Aug. 26. It will be his third title defense and he said opponents are getting harder to find because of his record and their insistence at getting more money to fight him.

If he keeps winning, he'll get to fight better known boxers, and that will put him closer to challenging whoever will be holding the world championship belt, Medina said.